

tomorrow, and then I'll be glad to answer any other questions you have.

But I think right now, you just need to know that I think he's wonderful, and he's been a wonderful friend to me, and he's been great for America these last 8 years with what he's done in the Senate. And he's been great for our party with what he's done through the Democratic Leadership Council. So I'm very happy about Joe Lieberman. But I think we ought to let the announcement be made by the Vice President. You guys ask the questions later. I'll be ready to answer all the questions.

NOTE: The exchange began at noon at the U.S. Coast Guard Station at West Chop Lighthouse. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Signing the Oceans Act of 2000

August 7, 2000

Today, I am pleased to approve S. 2327, the "Oceans Act of 2000." This legislation would establish a "Commission on Ocean Policy," to make recommendations to the President and the Congress for a coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy.

The United States is an ocean nation. Our ocean territory of over 4 million square miles is the largest and richest in the world. Over thirty years have passed since the Stratton Commission conducted a comprehensive examination of our Nation's ocean and coastal resources. The work of that Commission led to many significant achievements in the early 1970s, including enactment of major legislation to protect the oceans and coastal areas and creation of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It is appropriate, especially in the wake of the many recent scientific and technological advancements and pressures facing the oceans and our coasts, to re-examine our Nation's relationship to the sea.

My Administration has undertaken several initiatives that will support the work of the Commission. In 1998, I, along with Vice President Gore and the First Lady, participated in the first-ever National Ocean Con-

ference, which was attended by over 500 individuals representing all sectors of the ocean community, from government to industry, science to conservation. At that conference, I called on the Congress to create an oceans commission to help forge a new strategy to preserve the incomparable natural resources of our oceans and seas. The Vice President and I launched a series of new steps to restore coral reefs, rebuild marine fisheries, preserve freedom of the seas, and further explore the ocean. My Administration's Oceans Report Task Force is currently implementing several initiatives related to ocean exploration, coral reef protection, safe navigation, environmentally sound and economically viable aquaculture, improved fisheries enforcement, and the establishment of an international observation network to better understand the role of oceans in climate. The Task Force will be beneficial to the Commission as it begins its important work next year.

My Administration's Coral Reef Task Force has produced a National Action Plan to protect our Nation's precious corals and, earlier this year, I directed Federal agencies to establish an integrated national system of Marine Protected Areas. Most recently, I announced an Ocean Exploration initiative to develop a national ocean exploration strategy and work toward solving some of the mysteries of the ocean through the development of new technologies and newly discovered organisms with medical and commercial potential.

In approving this measure, I note that section 4(a) states that the President "shall submit to Congress a statement of proposals to implement or respond to the Commission's recommendations" concerning a national ocean policy, which may include recommendations for changes to Federal law. The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution provides that the President "shall from time to time . . . recommend to [the Congress] Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient," U.S. Const. Art. II, § 3. That Clause protects the President's authority to formulate and

present his own recommendations, which includes the power to decline to offer any recommendation. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President's constitutionally protected policy-making prerogatives, I construe section 4(a) not to extend to the submission of proposals or responses that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient to present.

I am disappointed that S. 2327 restricts the President's appointment of 12 of the 16 members of the Commission to nominees of the leadership of the Senate and House of Representatives. Additionally, I believe the Commission should focus on domestic, non-military, ocean, and coastal activities.

I congratulate the congressional supporters of this legislation, especially Senator Hollings. I am pleased that there is a renewed national interest in the ocean, including a growing sense of the opportunities to utilize marine and coastal resources, and a sense of stewardship to manage these resources in a sustainable manner. As I have said before, I consider preservation of our living oceans to be a sacred legacy for all time to come. S. 2327 will enhance our understanding of the ocean and contribute to shaping U.S. ocean policy.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2327, approved August 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106-256.

Statement on the Anniversary of the United States Embassy Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania

August 7, 2000

I join all Americans in remembering the lives lost 2 years ago today in the bombing of our Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Twelve dedicated Americans perished on that day, together with 44 Kenyan and Tanzanian citizens working to support our diplomatic efforts, and more than 200 other innocent people. The targets of this crime were doing so much good: helping Africans and each other to promote peace and democracy, to fight poverty and disease, to

protect the environment, and to aid American citizens in need. I believe they were targets precisely because they were dedicated to principles of tolerance, understanding, and cooperation across frontiers. The terrorists took from us our colleagues, friends, and loved ones, but they have failed utterly to deter us from advancing these principles around the world.

Today we remember that, in many ways, the men and women who serve America in our diplomatic missions endure as much danger and hardship as the men and women who serve America in our military. As long as the world is as it is, we cannot eliminate the risk. But we can and must give them the support they need to minimize that risk, and the backing they deserve to achieve America's goals in the world.

Remarks at a Lunch With Firefighters in Burgdorf Junction, Idaho

August 8, 2000

Scott, I want to thank you for this. And I want to thank Dave Alexander for making me feel welcome here. And I just want to say I appreciate what you're doing. I could have used this about 7½ years ago I think, when I got to Washington. There was a lot of underbrush that needed cutting there. [Laughter] I will treasure this for the rest of my life. Thank you.

I wanted to begin today, if I might, by thanking your Governor, Dirk Kempthorne, for coming out here with me, and Senator Larry Craig and Helen and Mike—both your Members of Congress are here from Idaho. And I'm very grateful to them for that. Let's give them a hand for being here and for the support they've given you. [Applause]

And of course, as Secretary Glickman said, our Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt, came today, along with Louis Caldera, the Secretary of the Army, and Mike Dombeck, who is your chief of the Forest Service. And mostly we came here to say thanks.

I got to fly over at least some of the fires, and it was early morning, and I know they haven't reared their ugly heads yet, but I have some sense of what you're doing. I also